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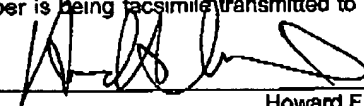
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I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown below.

Dated: February 28, 2006



Howard F. Mandelbaum

BY FAX 1-571-273-8300 - 8 Pages

Mail Stop RESPONSES - NO FEE  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450


Re: U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/600,460  
Universal Signal Distribution System  
Polo Filisan  
Our Ref: METR0270US

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is a Response To Office Action.

Any unpaid fee or balance which must be paid at this time to keep the case alive, may be charged to deposit account no. 06-0735.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Howard F. Mandelbaum  
Reg. No. 27,519

HFM/mic  
enc.

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## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of: Polo Filisan

For: Universal Signal Distribution System

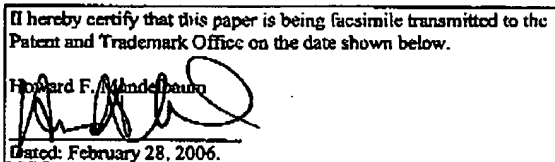
Serial No.: 09/600,460

Filed: 10/30/2000

Examiner: Saltarelli

Group Art Unit: 2611

Attorney Docket No.: METR0270US



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February 28, 2006

Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

## RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

This communication is responsive to the office action mailed November 28, 2005 in the above identified patent application.

Claims 1-51 were in the application. In the last office action, claims 1-51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for obviousness.

More specifically, claims 1-4, 6-9, 12-36, 50 and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Nicholson in view of Hamlin and Hoarty. Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as

obvious over Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty in view of Macdonald. Claims 10, 11 and 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty in view of Dufresne. Claims 37-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty in view of Sward and Diehl.

It is the Examiner's contention that Nicholson discloses a system having means for receiving signals, means for converting the frequencies of said signals onto personal channels, means for mixing information signals onto a distribution network, a plurality of signal sockets operatively connected to the mixing means, and a plurality of receivers each of which is connected to a respective one of the signal sockets for receiving the signals wherein the signals are reserved to predetermined signal sockets.

The Examiner acknowledges that Nicholson fails to disclose the use of both analog and digital signals, means for demodulating digital signals having different transmission standards, means for remodulating the digital signals with a sole type of digital modulation, means for mixing remodulated digital signals and analog signals onto a distribution network, and receivers suitable for decoding such sole type of modulation which are intended to receive the digital signals.

The Examiner relies on Hamlin as teaching the receipt of signals with multiple transmission standards, their demodulation, and their remodulation into a sole type of modulation. However, the

Examiner also recognizes that Hamlin, like Nicholson, fails to disclose the use of analog and digital signals.

Hoarty is relied upon by the Examiner for its teaching that analog and digital signals can be combined into a single distribution feed for simultaneously providing different content to different households with different receivers.

None of Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty, whether considered separately or in combination, suggests demodulating only digital signals which are then remodulated with a sole type of modulation, and then mixing the remodulated digital signals with analog signals which have not been processed in the same way as the digital signals.

Claims 1 and claim 50, the only independent claims in the application recite:

1. A system for the distribution to a condominium and/or community environment of a plurality of analog and digital signals transmitted according to different standards, comprising

means for receiving said analog and digital signals,

means for converting the frequencies of said digital signals, including means for demodulating said digital signals having different transmission standards and means for remodulating said demodulated digital signals with a sole type of digital modulation,

means for mixing said analog signals and said remodulated digital signals on a distribution network . . . .

50. Method for the distribution to a condominium and/or community environment, of a

plurality of analog and digital signals. . . .comprising the steps of:

- receiving said analog and digital signals;
- operating a frequency conversion of the received digital signals; and
- mixing said analog and digital signals on a distribution network . . . .

wherein in the step of frequency conversion of the received digital signals, said received digital signals are demodulated, and then remodulated with a sole type of digital modulation, then mixed with other information signals in a common signal on the distribution network. . . . .

It is respectfully submitted that the demodulation and remodulation of digital signals separate and apart from analog signals, and the combination of the remodulated digital signals with the analog signals is not rendered obvious by Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty. Even if the apparatuses disclosed in the three cited references could somehow be combined to do so, there is no teaching that would suggest such a combination.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 50 are patentable, as are claims 2 - 49 which depend from claim 1, and claim 51 which depends from claim 50.

Moreover, it is submitted that the combination of Nicholson and Hamlin would not be obvious to one skilled in the art. Hamlin discloses the use of interface pods, i.e. elements which are dedicated only to the receipt of information, not to an exchange of information. Obviously such interface pods cannot be used in an environment wherein equipment is required to send and receive

information. It follows that it would not be obvious to modify Nicholson's system with the teachings of Hamlin.

The Examiner asserts that the teachings of Hamlin could be used "for the benefit of distributing multiple signals received in differing formats, for greater flexibility in programming offered to users, without requiring unique receiver equipment at different reception sites." But Nicholson already requires identical office terminals for receiving signals having different formats.

Nicholson requires the same terminal for each installation, just as Hamlin requires the same interface pod. The only difference is that Nicholson requires different band filters 23 for each installation. However, according to Nicholson several devices can be connected to a single terminal (TV, VCR, computer, printer, camera, microphone). Hamlin does not require different band filters but does require one interface pod for a maximum of two receiving units.

In fact, Nicholson is able to distribute different format signals with less equipment than Hamlin requires. It would, therefore, not be expected that one skilled in the art would modify Nicholson by introducing one interface for one or two receiving units. This would not be acceptable in an installation wherein more than two pieces of equipment must be able to access the network.

It is therefore submitted that a person skilled in the art would not combine Nicholson and Hamlin in order to approach the instant invention.

The Examiner has also opined that Hoarty refers to an "analogous art" and, therefore, would also be considered by one skilled in the art in combination with Nicholson and Hamlin.

Hoarty relates to a cable television system (col. 1, lines 14 - 16) which is very different from a system for the distribution of TV signals in a condominium. It is important not to confuse a broadcasting system, having a head end with plants and large distribution systems like fiber optic backbones and radio bridges, with a system for distributing TV signals to different units of a condominium or other community environment which does not require telecommunication plants.

According to Hoarty, analog and digital signals are mixed together in the headend 11 of a distribution network, i.e. in a telecommunications plant. Analog and digital signals are then broadcast on the same cable of the same network which is brought to each dwelling.

Even considering Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty as relating to analogous art, one skilled in the art would not combine their teachings. Nicholson and Hamlin teach receiving different signals at the condominium and mixing them on the same cable. On the contrary, Hoarty teaches mixing different signals on the same "broadcasting" cable before reaching the condominium. The former and latter teachings are so different that it cannot be seen how or why one skilled in the art would combine them.

Finally, Hoarty does not teach the management of received analog and digital signals in different ways as claimed by Applicant nor does the combination of Nicholson, Hamlin and Hoarty.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1-51 is respectfully requested and early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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HFM:cnt